



Hon. Robert T. Matsui

Member of Congress

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Robert T. Matsui

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MATSUI STATEMENT ON PASSAGE OF THE REPUBLICAN MEDICARE PLAN

"Seniors can't afford this plan"

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Robert T. Matsui (D-Sacramento) issued the following statement today on the passage of the Republican Medicare bill:

"On all counts, the so-called Medicare prescription drug benefit passed today by the House of Representatives is bad for America's seniors.

"First, Republicans claim the plan covers 75% of seniors' prescription drug costs. But under this plan, a senior who has \$5100 in yearly drug costs will pay \$4020 of that out of their own pocket. That's 80% of the cost – far more than what Republicans would have you believe.

"There is also a huge gap in coverage. Seniors completely lose any coverage after \$2250 in drug costs and the benefit does not resume until a senior reaches \$5100 in drug costs. This 'donut hole' hits when seniors need the most help paying for their prescription drugs. But even though seniors do not have any coverage, they still have to pay an expensive monthly premium.

"Second, this plan does nothing to help reduce the cost of prescription drugs for seniors. In fact, it explicitly prohibits Medicare from using the collective purchasing power of 40 million beneficiaries to negotiate lower drug prices for beneficiaries.

"Third, under this flawed plan, over two million seniors stand to lose their health coverage. It discriminates against employer-sponsored retiree plans, encouraging employers to drop the good health coverage they currently provide seniors.

"But worst of all, the Republican plan seeks to privatize Medicare. Medicare will be forced to compete with private companies for the provision of Medicare and all prescription drug benefits. This fundamentally changes Medicare and undermines this successful program's promise of providing health care for all America's seniors.

"Some have said seniors can't afford to wait for 'perfect'. But seniors can't afford this plan at all. It does nothing to decrease drug prices, it doesn't provide adequate prescription drug coverage and it erodes the basic tenets of Medicare. America's seniors deserve a truly affordable, defined prescription drug benefit under Medicare."

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